

Swamp Fox Scene

A FREE monthly news magazine for the citizens of and visitors to the Swamp Fox City



City to be host to first career day in Swamp Fox Higher Ed Center

After serving county's high school juniors and seniors, event will be open to interested members of the public

The City of Marion has partnered with Coastal Carolina University, Francis Marion University, Florence Darlington Technical College, armed forces recruiters and SC Works to bring a county-wide "Career Day" to the Swamp Fox Higher Education Center in Marion.

This first Career Day is for all high school juniors and seniors and will be on March 13 and 14 in the Higher Education Center, inside the C.D. Joyner Fine Arts Center on Elizabeth Street.

Marion County schools will be transporting their students to the center.

About 400 students are expected to visit over the course of the two days and will be able to speak with academic and financial aid advisors, as well as others, regarding career offerings, planners said.

Students will meet with advisors and career professionals from 8:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. each day. On Wednesday, March 14, any member of the public will also be allowed to visit with advisors, recruiters and career planners from 3-6 p.m. to discuss college and career plans.

During the two days of the Career Day, the Swamp Fox Computer Lab will be closed. It will reopen for regular hours



on Thursday, March 15 at 10 a.m.

For information about the Career Day, call Frank Page, director of the city's recreation department, at 843-423-5410.

Thursday Night LIVE!
MARION Opera House
 100 West Court Street
 Doors open at 6:30 p.m.
 Shows start at 7 p.m.
 250 seat capacity
FREE Admission

Concert series returns to Opera House

Marion's Opera House will come alive beginning March 1 at 7 p.m. when the "Thursday Night LIVE!" series begins again. The FREE concerts will showcase nationally and regionally well-known talent on the historic Marion Opera House stage at 100 West Court Street.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and seating is limited to 250.

Lineup includes:

March 1: Slug's Revenge of Florence; Blue Grass & Folk

March 8: Drink Small of Columbia; "Dr. Blues"

March 15: Melanie McMillan of Florence; Acoustic/Folk, Rock/Pop

March 22: Gal Friday of Matthews, N.C.; Bluegrass/Country/Southern Rock

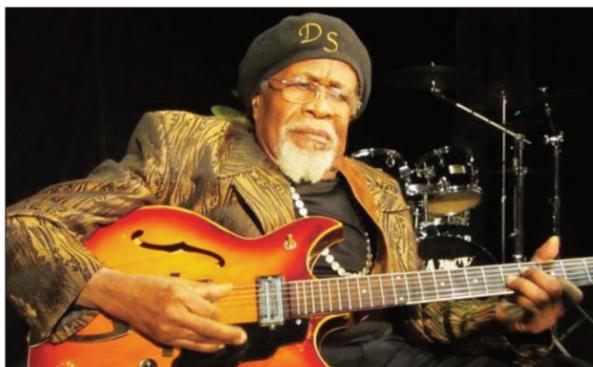
March 29: Three Days Redemption of Marion; Christian Contemporary



Slug's Revenge, March 1



Melanie McMillan, March 15



Drink Small, "Dr. Blues," March 8



Gal Friday, March 22

The concert series is sponsored by T-Mobile, McDonald's of Marion, the City of Marion, the Marion Chamber of Commerce, Arts Council of Marion County, & Olde Towne Marion, HMRA.

For information, call 423-5961.

Three Days Redemption
March 29



CITY NEWS

City selects Rec Department's Thompson as Employee of the Month



During last month's City Council Meeting, Mayor Rodney Berry and Marion City Council recognized Billy Thompson, shown at left, as the January 2012 City Employee of the Month.

Billy has been employed with the Marion Recreation Department since August of 1990. He began in the maintenance department and worked his way up to his current position as Athletic Director.

Billy oversees the City's many youth sports programs, a responsibility that allows him to work with the children of our community. To ensure safety, he is committed to helping them learn to have fun while following the rules. He also serves on the City's Safety Committee.

Well known for his dedication to youth sports in Marion, and for his love of the game of basketball, Billy has been previously recognized by city officials for his hard work and commitment to the City of Marion and the Marion Recreation Department. In 2007, city officials named him City Employee of the Year.

Marion Fire Department hires new Assistant Fire Chief

Chris McKenzie is the city's newly appointed Assistant Fire Chief. With more than 20 years experience in emergency services, Chris is a certified law enforcement officer, firefighter and paramedic.

A Rockingham native, Chris is a graduate of the University of North Carolina. He resides in Marion with his wife, Heather, and their four children. Chris is actively involved in the community, volunteering as a coach with the Marion Recreation Department and serving as a volunteer firefighter and member of the Marion Rescue Squad.

"We are ecstatic to have such a high-caliber individual as Chris McKenzie join our department on a full-time basis," Fire Chief Trey Cooper said. Cooper added that he has high expectations for McKenzie and looks forward to working with him to continue making the City of Marion Fire Department the best in the state.



3rd annual Swamp Fox Chili Cook-off a hit with vendors, visitors

More than 1,000 people gathered Feb. 25, on Dozier and Court Streets to taste chili and hang out with friends during the 2012 Celebrating Gen. Francis Marion Days! The weekend of events drew hundreds into town for 18th century living history exhibits and demonstrations, the Historic Marion RunFest and the Swamp Fox Chili Cook-off.



Program at city's Higher Ed Center wins foundation award

Brianna Zhang, Manager of the Kelley Small Business Institute Center for Entrepreneurship at Francis Marion University, travels this month to receive the 2012 Leavy Award from the Freedom Foundations for excellence in Private Enterprise Education for a program conducted in Marion at the Swamp Fox Higher Education Center in 2011.

Jimmy Bailey of YESCarolina and Waste Management were critical sponsors of the program, she said. In brief, in the spring of 2011 FMU, in conjunction with YesCarolina and WM, offered a first-of-its-kind Entrepreneurship Workshop for unemployed or under-employed adults in Marion County. Instructor Zhang lead the group through four weeks of training, culminating in individual business plans. Three cash awards were given.

Zhang was recognized by the national group for her work and travels to Philadelphia to receive the award. Zhang said it was a "great honor to work with the city and county of Marion to see the program come to light." The Leavy Award honors excellence in private enterprise education. For information, visit www.freedomfoundation.org/Leavy-Awards.cfm

Coming up

Keep up with what's going on in and around Marion!

It's a Month of Art in the Marion County Museum!

In addition to the exhibit of the winning art from the Blue Savannah-Swamp Fox Chapter DAR Women in History Art contest, also on display during March in the Marion County Museum will be the artwork of Glen Hayes of Dillon.

Museum Hours are 9 a.m.-noon and 1-5 p.m. Tuesday-Friday.

Additionally, on display throughout the museum, will be the works of art students from all grades at Marion High School, Johnakin Middle School, Marion Intermediate and Easterling Primary. Support the arts and check it out!

March 1st

Wednesday, 8:30 a.m., Olde Towne Marion, HMRA's Rise & Shine, First Charter as sponsor, in the HMRA office on Main Street. Everyone welcome. Call Chuck at 423-9918 for details.

March 6th

Tuesday, 6 p.m., New book club forming: Getting together in "Lunch" on Dozier Street. First Tuesday of each month. Book to read for APRIL will be **Heaven is for Real** by Todd Burpo. Call Carol at Lunch for more details, 423-7000.

March 12th

Monday, 5:30 p.m., Citizens Advisory Committee meeting (Second Monday of the Month), Fire Station, Bond Street.

March 13th

Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., City Council (Second Tuesday of the Month), Council Chambers, City Hall, 107 S. Main Street.

March 19th

Monday, 6:30 p.m., Marion's Fox Watch meeting, 332 N. Main Street.

March 21st

Wednesday, Noon, Wonderful Wednesday for Friends of the Marion County Museum. Author Becky Shuford. Call Rosanne at 423-8299 for details.

March 22nd

Lunch & Learn, Noon, Opera House, Call 843-4223-9918 for tickets, \$5 each;



lunch included. The Honorable Carroll T. Atkinson III will be guest speaker. Theme is "Marion Then, and Now."

FOODs & FILMs ...

Contact Brian Nolan for information on Marion's Foodie group and Film Club, sponsored by the Arts Council of Marion County. Next movie is "Midnight in Paris." You may also find the groups on Facebook or call Brian at 843-250-4322 or e-mail him at briannolanemail@gmail.com.

Coming in April ...

Easter Walk for children, along Main Street.

14th: The Farmers Market will re-open for the season at the Old Coca-Cola Plant on Bobby Gerald Blvd. Hours are 9 a.m.-1 p.m. each Saturday.

13th: Relay for Life: Friday-Saturday, Withlacoochee Park.

14th: Opening Day for Rec Baseball, April 14; Green Street Complex beginning at 9 a.m., and Marion High School Old-Timers Baseball at Fox Field at 1:30 p.m. Call Fulton Lane at 843-992-1301.

27th: 3rd annual Frogmore Fest at Rosewood Manor, \$15.00 per person, with live music ... Call Chuck at 423-9918 for details.



Texting + Driving = Disaster

The common use of cell phones has increased the temptation for all to text and drive, giving us another reason to be a distracted driver.

A recent Virginia Tech Transportation Institute study found that truck drivers who text while driving are 23 times more at risk to be involved in a "crash or near crash event." The study also found that any driver who texts while driving is distracted for an average of 4.6 seconds, just long enough to travel the length of a football field when driving 55 mph.

Many universities and organizations are studying the effects of texting and driving. The University of Utah found that "using a cell phone while driving, whether it's hand-held or hands-free, delays a driver's reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08 percent."

A 2007 AAA study, done with driving simulators, found that when talking on a cell phone:

- ☛ Young drivers' response times to brake lights ahead were as slow as those by elderly drivers;

- ☛ Drivers of all ages were 9 percent slower in hitting their brakes when needed; and

- ☛ Crash rates were more than five times greater than for undistracted drivers. That's an increase of more than 500 percent!

Additionally, Car and Driver Magazine (June 2009) tested the braking skills of two males, ages 22 and 37. First, the experiment established a baseline breaking distance, a while-texting breaking distance, and a while-intoxicated (0.08 blood alcohol content) breaking distance when driving a Honda Pilot.

At 35 mph, the 22-year-old, while reading a text, traveled an extra 21 feet (more than a car length) before hitting the brakes. He went 16 feet longer while

texting. At 70 mph, the 37-year-old traveled an additional 30 feet while reading a text and 31 feet while typing. Both men reported that they had no "idea that using his phone would slow down his reaction time so much."

The state Legislature has proposed several bills to outlaw texting and driving. Although these have not passed the legislature yet, the City of Columbia took matters into its own hands and passed a city ordinance in March 2011 that outlawed the composing of text or e-mail while driving. The law includes tweeting and posting to Facebook. Drivers who are caught texting while driving are fined \$100 and if found guilty, court costs would make the fine \$237.

The next time you're tempted to text, tweet, e-mail or otherwise type while driving, either ignore the urge or pull into a well-lit, safe location. In order to drive safely you must keep your eyes and your mind on the road. Driving must be your primary task.

Visit the Marion Chamber's Facebook page and discover their latest news and things to do!

Also on Facebook are The City of Marion and the Farmers Market & Market Place!

The *Swamp Fox Scene* is produced in City Hall and is the City of Marion's free monthly news magazine for citizens and visitors of the Swamp Fox City, Marion, South Carolina.

It is printed by Herald Multi-forms in Dillon, S.C. City of Marion employees Cheryl Askins, Elizabeth Ficik, Winky Fore, Pam Jones and Dianne Owens comprise the paper's staff. Call Pam if you are interested in sponsoring an issue. The newspaper is distributed by city employee Dennis Brown and may be found in City Hall, in the Marion Chamber of Commerce's office in the Historic Train Depot, in the Historic Marion Revitalization Association office on Main Street and in other spots around town. Call us if you'd like to be a distribution point. The Marion Chamber and HMRA help pay printing costs.

Call Mayor Rodney Berry or the City Administrator at 843-423-5961 for more information.

Questions about your water or sewer bill?

Call Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority at (843) 765-4539 or visit them in City Hall on Main Street.

SPORTS & RECREATION

Coming Up We're online!

The City of Marion Recreation Department has a Facebook Page and is on the Internet, on the www.Marionsc.gov web site. Find us under "Residents" and then click on "Recreation." To find us on Facebook, search Marion Recreation Department!

**Interested in Yoga?
Call 423-3561!**

Join us for aerobics!

Get moving and keep moving with our FREE Senior Aerobics class ... Senior Aerobics is offered in the Watsonia Recreation Center on Mondays and Thursdays from 9:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

Anyone interested in the class can visit any session and talk to Anna Boatwright, instructor. Call Cheryl at 423-5410 for more information. (Donations accepted.)

Additionally, anyone interested in working out during the week can take part in the recreation department's daily aerobics classes in a C.D. Joyner classroom, 221 Elizabeth Street, Monday-Friday 5:30-6:30 p.m. The cost for the class, led by Lillie Ann Sanders, is \$30 per month. Enrollment is continuous. Again, call Cheryl at 423-5410 if you have any questions.

Small Fry girls make it state tournament

In post-season basketball action, the city had six teams to represent Marion in the All Star playoffs. Of those, one, the Small Fry girls won their district and headed to play in the State Recreation League Tournament in Seneca on March 3. The 10 and under girls are coached by Ebony and Rick Johnson.

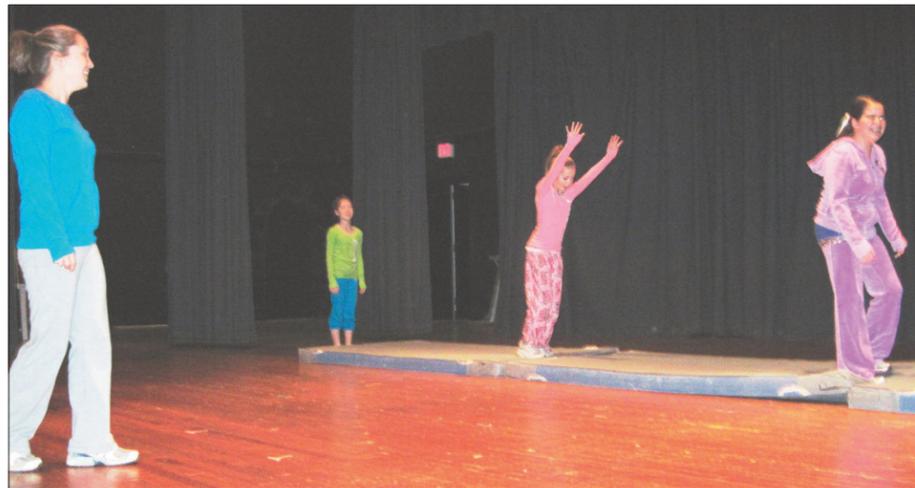
Other teams playing in the district playoffs were the Small Fry Boys, coached Orlando James, Antonio Vaught and Ken Campbell; Mite Girls (11-12 years old), coached by Tiifany McCummings and Latoria

Riggins; Mite Boys (11 years old), coached by Lance Gurley, Jeffery Gurley and Craig Lightfoot; Midget Boys, (12-14 years old), coached by Jermaine Jackson and Terry White; and the Junior Boys (15-17 years old), coached by Craig Hopkins, Kendrick Reaves and Anthony German.

Teams competing were from such towns as Bishopville, Bennettsville, Dillon, Cheraw and Lake City.

Congratulations to the players and coaches on a fine season!

Ready to roll!



Auditorium, Elizabeth Street.

Practices for the All Star Cheer groups, conducted Monday-Thursday and Saturday mornings, continue. Twenty girls are participating in the program, learning stunts, dances, jumps and tumbling and getting ready for a competition in April at Myrtle Beach. Anyone interested in sponsoring the teams can get in touch with coaches Kelly Morehouse or Tabatha Shelly on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4 p.m.-7 p.m. on the stage in the C.D. Joyner Fine Arts Center

Opening Day ceremonies planned for baseball

Join the fun and support the coaches & players!

Opening Day Ceremonies for this year's baseball season is planned for Saturday, April 14 at the Green Street Complex.

The day starts with team photos, and game times begin at 9 a.m.

The public is invited to attend and to help support the players and coaches for the 2012 Baseball, Softball and T-ball season. For more information about this event or to volunteer to help, call Cheryl at 423-5410.

Games will be held at the following locations:

The Pee Wee Minors and Majors will play at Tilghman Park, 409 Montgomery Street.

The 9-12-year-old Boys will play at the Watsonia Recreation Center, 100 Recreation Drive.

The 9-15-year-old Girls and the 13-14-year-old Boys will play at the Green Street Sports Complex, 301 Green Street.

Visit our Facebook pages for updates on the recreation activities offered through the City of Marion.

McKenzie, Herring take third place in regional paramedic competition

In October, 2011, Chris McKenzie and Andrew Herring, paramedics with the Marion Rescue Squad, competed and took third place in the 15th annual Carolina Competition.



Sponsored by Marlboro County Rescue Squad, Cumberland County E.M.S. and Fayetteville, N.C., 11 teams from all over the two Carolinas competed over two days. Participants are presented with challenging emergency scenarios and must perform duties within a 12-minute time period.

For their competition, McKenzie and Herring, who have competed together three times in the past three years, were presented with rendering emergency care to "patients" injured in an airplane crash at an airport and to "patients" injured when a tornado hit a hospital.

It is the first award for the two. McKenzie said the event is friendly and winners enjoy the comradery of competing and garnering bragging rights for a year. He also hopes to bring such a competition to Marion.



Chamber recognizes Yard of the Month

Mr. and Mrs. Clem Ham, 509 Willcox Avenue have been awarded the Marion Chamber of Commerce Yard of the Month for February 2012. The Chamber is proud to recognize those in our community that work so diligently, and add so much to our community's unique character. Mr. and Mrs. Ham will be receiving a gift certificate from Tru Green Nursery in recognition of this honor.